Application No. 09/546,976 Amendment dated December 31, 2004 Response to Office Action of August 29, 2003 Atty. Docket No. 42390.P9093X Examiner William C. Schultz TC/A.U. 2664

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present U.S. Patent

application as amended herein. Claim 1 has been amended. Claim 5 has been canceled.

No claims have been added. Thus, claims 1-4 are pending.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to correct typographical errors and not in response to

the cited references.

DRAWINGS

The drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(4)

for inconsistent reference numeral usage. Proposed corrections and formal drawings are

included in this amendment. Accordingly, Applicants request that the objections to the

drawings be withdrawn.

SPECIFICATION

The specification was objected to for various informalities. The informalities

identified in the Office Action have been corrected by this amendment. The specification

has also been amended to be consistent with the amendments to the drawings.

Accordingly, Appliance request that the objections to the specification be withdrawn.

-11-

Application No. 09/546,976 Amendment dated December 31, 2004 Response to Office Action of August 29, 2003 Atty. Docket No. 42390.P9093X Examiner William C. Schultz TC/A.U. 2664

CLAIM REJECTION – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 4 was rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,249,527 issued

to Verthein, et al. (Verthein) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,560,222 issued to Pounds, et al.

(Pounds). Claim 4 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of

claim 5. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 4, as amended, is in condition for

allowance.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 1-3 were allowed. Claim 5 was objected to as being dependent upon a

rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all

of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the rejections have been

overcome. Therefore, claims 1-4 are in condition for allowance and such action is

earnestly solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by

telephone if such contact would further the examination of the present application.

-12-

Application No. 09/546,976 Amendment dated December 31, 2004 Response to Office Action of August 29, 2003 Atty. Docket No. 42390.P9093X Examiner William C. Schultz TC/A.U. 2664

Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account number 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted, BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN, LLP

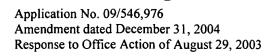
Date: DEC 31, 2004

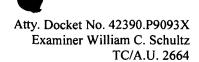
Paul A. Mendonsa Attorney for Applicant Reg. No. 42,879

12400 Wilshire Boulevard Seventh Floor Los Angeles, CA 90025-1026 (503) 439-8778

Attachments

the United Chains Postal Ser	respondence is being deposited with vice as first class mail with sufficient cassed to Commissioner for Patents (A 22313 on:
3)Dr	e of Deposit
DEBOTAH	L. Highan Mailing Correspondence
Signature	12-31-04
Oliniamia .	Data





Appendix: Drawings

